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Title: Romantic Selections II

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- Bright Star, Would I  
Were Steadfast as  
Thou Art -  
Bright star, would I were  
steadfast as thou art  
Not in lone splendour  
hung aloft the night,  
And watching, with eternal  
lids apart,  
Like nature's patient  
sleepless eremite,  
The moving waters at  
their priestlike task  
Of pure ablution round  
earth's human shores,  
Or gazing on the new  
soft-fallen mask  
Of snow upon the  
mountains and the moors;  
No yet still steadfast,  
still unchangeable,  
Pillow'd upon my fair  
love's ripening breast,  
To feel for ever its soft  
fall and swell,  
Awake for ever in a  
sweet unrest,  
Still, still to hear her  
tender-taken breath,  
And so live ever or else  
swoon to death.

- Ode to a Nightingale -  
My heart aches, and a  
drowsy numbness pains  
My sense, as though of  
hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull  
opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and  
Lethe-wards had sunk:  
'Tis not through envy of  
thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in  
thine happiness,--  
That thou, light-winged  
Dryad of the trees  
In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green, and

shadows numberless,  
Singest of summer in  
full-throated ease.  
O, for a draught of  
vintage! that hath been  
Cool'd a long age in the  
deep-delved earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the  
country green,  
Dance, and Provencal song,  
and sunburnt mirth!  
O for a beaker full of  
the warm South,  
Full of the true, the  
blushful Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles  
winking at the brim,  
And purple-stained mouth;  
That I might drink, and  
leave the world unseen,  
And with thee fade away  
into the forest dim:  
Fade far away, dissolve,  
and quite forget  
What thou among the  
leaves hast never known,  
The weariness, the fever,  
and the fret  
Here, where men sit and  
hear each other groan;  
Where palsy shakes a few,  
sad, last gray hairs,  
Where youth grows pale,  
and spectre-thin, and dies;  
Where but to think is to  
be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs,  
Where Beauty cannot keep  
her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at  
them beyond to-morrow.  
Away! away! for I will fly  
to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus  
and his pards,  
But on the viewless wings  
of Poesy,  
Though the dull brain  
perplexes and retards:  
Already with thee! tender  
is the night,  
And haply the Queen-Moon  
is on her throne,  
Cluster'd around by all  
her starry Fays;  
But here there is no  
light,  
Save what from heaven is

with the breezes blown  
Through verdurous glooms  
and winding mossy ways.  
I cannot see what flowers  
are at my feet,  
Nor what soft incense  
hangs upon the boughs,  
But, in embalmed darkness,  
guess each sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable  
month endows  
The grass, the thicket,  
and the fruit-tree wild;  
White hawthorn, and the  
pastoral eglantine;  
Fast fading violets cover'd  
up in leaves;  
And mid-May's eldest child,  
The coming musk-rose, full  
of dewy wine,  
The murmurous haunt of  
flies on summer eves.  
Darkling I listen; and, for  
many a time  
I have been half in love  
with easeful Death,  
Call'd him soft names in  
many a mused rhyme,  
To take into the air my  
quiet breath;  
Now more than ever seems  
it rich to die,  
To cease upon the  
midnight with no pain,  
While thou art pouring  
forth thy soul abroad  
In such an ecstasy!  
Still wouldst thou sing,  
and  
I have ears in vain--  
To thy high requiem  
become a sod.  
Thou wast not born for  
death, immortal Bird!  
No hungry generations  
tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this  
passing night was heard  
In ancient days by  
emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the self-same  
song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of  
Ruth, when, sick for  
home,  
She stood in tears amid  
the alien corn;  
The same that oft-times

hath

Charm'd magic casements,  
opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery  
lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is  
like a bell

To toll me back from  
thee to my sole self!

Adieu! the fancy cannot  
cheat so well

As she is fam'd to do,  
deceiving elf.

Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive  
anthem fades

Past the near meadows,  
over the still stream,  
Up the hill-side; and now  
'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades:

Was it a vision, or a  
waking dream?

Fled is that music:--Do I  
wake or sleep?